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— Matter shall reveal the Spirit's face.

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All the articles in this issue, except the last piece and the Information Letter are extracts from the writings and talks of SRI AUROBINDO and THE MOTHER. Most of the Mother's words are translations from the original French. Titles to these extracts are given by the editor.

In the Eternity of Time

What words will ever tell the splendour of Thy Law and the magnificence of Thy Glory! What words will express the Perfection of Thy Consciousness and the infinite bliss of Thy Love!

What words will sing Thy ineffable Peace and celebrate the Majesty of Thy Silence and the Grandeur of Thy all-powerful Truth!

The entire manifested universe cannot suffice to speak of Thy splendour and tell of Thy marvels, and in the eternity of time, this is what it is trying to do more and more, better and better, eternally.

July 31, 1915

...the brooding bliss of the Infinite,
Its omniscient and omnipotent repose,
Its immobile silence absolute and alone.

(*Savitri*, p. 682)

Life has a Purpose

The whole world knows, spiritual thinker and materialist alike, that the world for the created or naturally evolved being in the ignorance or the inconscience of Nature is neither a bed of roses nor a path of joyous Light. It is a difficult journey, a battle and struggle, an often painful and chequered growth, a life besieged by obscurity, falsehood and suffering. It has its mental, vital, physical joys and pleasures, but these bring only a transient taste — which yet the vital self is unwilling to forego — and they end in distaste, fatigue or disillusionment. What then? To say the Divine does not exist is easy, but it leads nowhere — it leaves you where you are with no prospect or issue — neither Russell nor any materialist can tell you where you are going or even where you ought to go. The Divine does not manifest himself so as to be recognised in the external world-circumstances — admittedly so. These are not the works of an irresponsible autocrat somewhere — they are the circumstances of a working out of Forces according to a certain nature of being, one might say a certain proposition or problem of being into which we have all really consented to enter and co-operate. The work is painful, dubious, its vicissitudes impossible to forecast? There are either of two possibilities then, to get out of it into Nirvana by the Buddhist or the illusionist way or to get inside oneself and find the Divine there since he is not discoverable on the surface. For those who have made the attempt, and there were not

...the mighty yearning...
That asks a perfect life on earth for men

(*Savitri*, p. 369)

a few but hundreds and thousands, have testified through the ages that he is there and that is why there exists the yoga. It takes long? The Divine is concealed behind a thick veil of his Maya and does not answer at once or at any early stage to our call? Or he gives only a glimpse uncertain and passing and then withdraws and waits for us to be ready? But if the Divine has any value, is it not worth some trouble and time and labour to follow after him and must we insist on having him without any training or sacrifice or suffering or trouble? It is surely irrational to make a demand of such a nature. It is positive that we have to get inside, behind the veil to find him; it is only then that we can see him outside and the intellect be not so much convinced as forced to admit his presence by experience — just as when a man sees what he has denied and can no longer deny it. But for that the means must be accepted and the persistence in the will and patience in the labour.

SRI AUROBINDO

(*Letters on Yoga*, Cent. ed. vol. 22, pp. 163-64)

Even in the worm is a god and it writhes for a
form and an outlet
Workings immortal obscurely struggling, hints
of a godhead
Labour to form in this clay a divinity....

Sri Aurobindo

(Ilion, *Collected Poems*, p. 437)

Necessity of Work in Our Yoga

To go entirely inside in order to have experiences and to neglect the work, the external consciousness, is to be unbalanced, one-sided in the Sadhana — for our Yoga is integral; so also to throw oneself outward and live in the external being alone is to be unbalanced, one-sided in the Sadhana. One must have the same consciousness in inner experience and outward action and make both full of the Mother.[1]

*

The ordinary life consists in work for personal aim and satisfaction of desire under some mental or moral control, touched sometimes by a mental idea. The Gita's yoga consists in the offering of one's work as a sacrifice to the Divine, the conquest of desire, egoless and desireless action, bhakti for the Divine, an entering into the cosmic consciousness, the sense of unity with all creatures, oneness with the Divine. This yoga adds the bringing down of the supramental Light and Force (its ultimate aim) and the transformation of the nature.[2]

*

Work is part of the Yoga and it gives the best opportunity for calling down the Presence, the Light and the Power into the vital and its activities; it increases also the field and the opportunity of surrender.[3]

*

SERVICE

To be at the Divine's service is the surest means of attaining realisation.

(*Name and explanation given by the Mother*)

Flowers of the Service Tree canopying the Samadhi in the Ashram courtyard. Fragrant, golden-yellow flowers with delicately crinkled petals, rust-coloured at base and sepals, in terminal panicles. (*Botanical name:* Peltaphorum pterocarpum)

We aim at the divine realisation not only in the immobility of the Spirit, but also in the movement of Nature. And this cannot be altogether until we can feel the presence and power of the Divine in every step, motion, figure of our activities, in every turn of our will, in every thought, feeling and impulse. No doubt, we can feel that in a sense even in the nature of the Ignorance, but it is the divine Power and Presence in a disguise, a diminution, an inferior figure. Ours is a greater demand, that our nature shall be a power of the Divine in the Truth of the Divine, in the Light, in the force of the eternal self-conscient Will, in the wideness of the sempiternal Knowledge....

It is possible to rise beyond spiritualised mind and to act spontaneously in the living presence of the original divine Truth-Force of the Supreme Mother. Our motion one with her motion and merged in it, our will one with her will, our energy absolved in her energy, we shall feel her working through us as the Divine manifest in a supreme Wisdom-Power, and we shall be aware of the transformed mind, life and body only as the channels of a supreme Light and Force beyond them, infallible in its steps because transcendent and total in its knowledge. Of this Light and Force we shall not only be the recipients, channels, instruments, but become a part of it in a supreme uplifted abiding experience.[4]

SRI AUROBINDO

[1] *The Mother*, p. 199. [2] *Letters on Yoga*, p. 669. [3] *The Mother*, pp. 200-01. [4] *The Synthesis of Yoga*, pp. 240-41.

Joy in Work

It is not that you have to do what you dislike, but that you have to cease to dislike. To do only what you like is to indulge the vital and maintain its domination over the nature — for that is the very principle of the untransformed nature, to be governed by its likes and dislikes. To be able to do anything with equanimity is the principle of Karmayoga and to do with joy because it is done for the Mother is the true psychic and vital condition in this yoga.

*

The reason of the difference of result between the two moods in work is that the first mood is that of a vital joy, while the other is that of a psychic quiet. Vital joy though it is a very helpful thing for the ordinary human life, is something excited, eager, mobile without a settled basis — that is why it soon gets tired and cannot continue. Vital joy has to be replaced by a quiet settled psychic gladness with the mind and vital very clear and very peaceful. When one works on this basis, then everything becomes glad and easy, in touch with the Mother's force and fatigue or depression do not come.

SRI AUROBINDO

(*Letters on Yoga*, Cent. ed. vol. 23, pp. 680-81)

How to Work

...do the work consciously and scrupulously, allowing nothing to interfere with its exact discharge. If you did that, opening yourself at the same time to the Mother in your work, you would receive more constantly the grace and would come to feel her power doing the work through you; you would thus be able to live constantly with the sense of her presence. If, on the contrary, you allow your fancies or desires to interfere with your work or are careless and negligent, you interrupt the flow of her grace and give room for sorrow and uneasiness and other foreign forces to enter into you. Yoga through work is the easiest and most effective way to enter into the stream of this Sadhana.[1]

*

Mother does not disapprove of your writing a book — what she does not like is your being so lost in it that you can do nothing else. You must be master of what you do and not possessed by it. She quite agrees to your finishing and offering the book on your birthday, if that can be done. But you must not be carried away — you must keep your full contact with higher things.[2]

*

I repeat that we do not object to your writing — whether it be poetry or short stories or novels. What we felt was that this kind of total absorption and possession by it was not good for your spiritual condition and that it put a lesser thing in front, even occupying

the *whole* front of the consciousness for most of the time instead of putting it in its proper place in a sound spiritual harmony.[3]

*

What is of first importance is... the inner attitude in which it is done. If the attitude is vital and not psychic, then one throws oneself out in the work and loses the inner contact. If it is psychic, the inner contact remains, the Force is felt supporting or doing the work and the sadhana progresses.[4]

*

You must gather yourself within more firmly. If you disperse yourself constantly, go out of the inner circle, you will constantly move about in the pettinesses of the ordinary outer nature and under the influences to which it is open. Learn to live within, to act always from within, from a constant communion with the Mother. It may be difficult at first to do it always and completely, but it can be done if one sticks to it — and it is at that price, by learning to do that, that one can have the Siddhi in the Yoga.[5]

*

When things become confused outside, you must fix on your mind at once the rule of not judging by appearances — refer all to the Mother's Light within with the confidence that all will be clear.[6]

SRI AUROBINDO

[1] *The Mother*, p. 207. [2] *Letters on Yoga*, p. 688. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 688. [4] *Ibid.*, 674. [5] *The Mother*, p. 213. [6] *Ibid.*, p. 214.

Circumstances Test Our Surrender

[1]For always, at least once in our life, we are placed in some circumstance to test whether we are ready for an entire surrender to the Divine Will; whether we are, before all, human beings striving to attain and manifest the Godhead; ready to renounce everything in the world — what seems to us good as well as what seems bad — for that supreme conquest. In that ascent towards the heights, both virtues and duties — that is to say our mental prejudices and preferences — stand far more in our way than our exterior weaknesses and faults. An error can always be used as a spring-board, whilst a virtue is the more often a limit, a barrier that must be surmounted.

I will add, quoting a passage of *The Synthesis of Yoga*, "All these are within us waiting to wall in the spirit with forms; but we must always go beyond, always renounce the lesser for the greater, the finite for the Infinite; we must be prepared to proceed from illumination to illumination, from experience to experience, from soul-state to soul-state so as to reach the utmost transcendence of the Divine and its utmost universality."

THE MOTHER

[1] Hitherto unpublished words of the Mother.

When You have a Little Time

How often there is a kind of emptiness in the course of life, an unoccupied moment, a few minutes, sometimes more. And what do you do? Immediately you try to distract yourself, and you invent some foolishness or other to pass your time. That is a common fact. All men, from the youngest to the oldest, spend most of their time in trying not to be bored. Their pet aversion is boredom and the way to escape from boredom is to act foolishly.

Well, there is a better way than that — to remember.

When you have a little time, whether it is one hour or a few minutes, tell yourself, "At last, I have some time to concentrate, to collect myself, to relive the purpose of my life, to offer myself to the True and the Eternal." If you took care to do this each time you are not harassed by outer circumstances, you would find out that you were advancing very quickly on the path. Instead of wasting your time in chattering, in doing useless things, reading things that lower the consciousness — to choose only the best cases, I am not speaking of other imbecilities which are much more serious — instead of trying to make yourself giddy, to make time, that is already so short, still shorter only to realise at the end of your life that you have lost three-quarters of your chance — then you want to put in double time, but that does not work — it is better to be moderate,

balanced, patient, quiet, but never to lose an opportunity that is given to you, that is to say, to utilise for the true purpose the unoccupied moment before you.

When you have nothing to do, you become restless, you run about, you meet friends, you take a walk, to speak only of the best; I am not referring to things that are obviously not to be done. Instead of that, sit down quietly before the sky, before the sea or under trees, whatever is possible (here you have all of them) and try to realise one of these things — to understand why you live, to learn how you must live, to ponder over what you want to do and what should be done, what is the best way of escaping from the ignorance and falsehood and pain in which you live....

16. 5. 1958 THE MOTHER

(*Collected Works of the Mother*, Vol. 3, pp. 250-51)

All life is only a lavish and manifold opportunity given us to discover, realise, express the Divine.

Sri Aurobindo

Words of the Mother

Violence is never the right way to make a cause triumph. How can you expect to establish justice by injustice, harmony by hatred.

*

Be always good and you will always be happy.
A good action is sweeter to the heart than a candy to the tongue.

*

A day passed without accomplishing a good action is a day without a soul.

*

Do good for the love of good and not with the hope of recognition. Be good for the joy of doing good and not so that people are grateful to you.

*

The most beautiful thoughts do not help us to progress if we do not have a constant will that they should change in us into higher feelings, more exact sensations and better actions.

THE MOTHER

(*The Call Beyond*, Feb. 1978, pp. 24-25)

The Domain of Chance

What do we understand by the term "chance"? Chance can only be the opposite of order and harmony. There is only one true harmony and that is the supramental — the reign of Truth, the expression of the Divine Law. In the Supermind, therefore, chance has no place. But in the lower Nature the supreme Truth is obscured: hence there is an absence of that divine unity of purpose and action which alone can constitute order. Lacking this unity, the domain of lower Nature is governed by what we may call chance — that is to say, it is a field in which various conflicting forces intermix, having no single definite aim. Whatever arises out of such a rushing together of forces is a result of confusion, dissonance and falsehood — a product of chance. Chance is not merely a conception to cover our ignorance of the causes at work; it is a description of the uncertain *mêlée* of the lower Nature which lacks the calm one-pointedness of the divine Truth. The world has forgotten its divine origin and become an arena of egoistic energies; but it is still possible for it to open to the Truth, call it down by its aspiration and bring about a change in the whirl of chance. What men regard as a mechanical sequence of events, owing to their own mental associations, experiences and generalisations, is really manipulated by subtle agencies each of which tries to get its own will done. The world has got so subjected to these undivine agencies that the victory of the Truth cannot be won except by fighting for it. It

has no right to it: it has to gain it by disowning the falsehood and the perversion, an important part of which is the facile notion that, since all things owe their final origin to the Divine, all their immediate activities also proceed directly from it. The fact is that here in the lower Nature the Divine is veiled by a cosmic Ignorance and what takes place does not proceed directly from the divine knowledge. That everything is equally the will of God is a very convenient suggestion of the hostile influences which would have the creation stick as tightly as possible to the disorder and ugliness to which it has been reduced. So what is to be done, you ask? Well, call down the Light, open yourselves to the power of Transformation. Innumerable times the divine peace has been given to you and as often you have lost it — because something in you refuses to surrender its petty egoistic routine. If you are not always vigilant, your nature will return to its old unregenerate habits even after it has been filled with the descending Truth. It is the struggle between the old and the new that forms the crux of the Yoga; but if you are bent on being faithful to the supreme Law and Order revealed to you, the parts of your being belonging to the domain of chance will, however slowly, be converted and divinised.

THE MOTHER

(*Collected Works of the Mother*, Vol. 3, pp. 163-64)

The Mother on Unity

The World is a unity — it has always been, and it is always so, even now it is so — it is not that it has not got the unity and the unity has to be brought in from outside and imposed upon it.

Only the World is not conscious of its unity. It has to be made conscious.

We consider now is the time most propitious for the endeavour.

For, a new Force or Consciousness or Light — whatever you call the new element — has manifested into the World and the World has now the capacity to become conscious of its own unity.

(*25. 3. 1960*)

*

The unity of humanity is an underlying and existing fact. But the external union of mankind depends on man's goodwill and sincerity.

(*12. 8. 1967*)

*

What you ought to learn is to harmonise, synthesise, combine all the disparate things in the universe by putting each one *in its place*. Total harmony does not at all lie in an identity, but in a harmonisation which can come only by putting each thing in its place.

(*13. 3. 1957*)

*

"The spiritual life reveals the one essence in all, but reveals too its infinite diversity; it works for diversity in oneness and for perfection in that diversity."[1]

This is the very motive of the creation of the universe, that is to say, all are one, all is one in its origin, but each thing, each element, each being has as its mission the revealing of one part of this unity to itself, and it is this particularity which must be developed in everyone, while awakening at the same time the sense of the original unity. This is "to work for unity in diversity". And the perfection in that diversity lies in everyone's being perfectly what he ought to be.

(17. 4. 1951)

*

All countries are equal and essentially one; everyone of them represents an aspect of the One Supreme.

In the terrestrial manifestation they have all the same right to a free expression of themselves.

From the spiritual point of view, the importance of a country does not depend on its size or its power or its authority among other countries, but on its response to Truth and the degree of Truth it is capable of manifesting.[2]

*

It is only by the growth and establishment of the consciousness of human unity, that a true and lasting

[1] The Mother, *Conversations*, 4. 8. 1929.

[2] *Bulletin*, August 1966, p. 85.

peace can be achieved upon earth. All means leading towards this goal are welcome, although the external ones have a very limited effect; however, the most important, urgent and indispensable of all is a transformation of the human consciousness itself, an enlightenment of and conversion in its working.

(*24. 4. 1955*)

*

If you want peace upon earth, first establish peace in your heart.

If you want union in the world, first unify the different parts of your own being.

(*For Christmas, 1964*)

*

Q: How can persons having different values live and work together in harmony ?

The solution is to go deep in oneself, and to find the place where all the differences combine to constitute the essential and eternal unity.

(*4. 5. 1969*)

THE MOTHER

Unity does not come from any exterior disposition, but by becoming conscious of the eternal Oneness.

The Mother

Our India

The people of India, even the 'ignorant masses' have this distinction that they are by centuries of training nearer to the inner realities, are divided from them by a less thick veil of the universal ignorance and are more easily led back to a vital glimpse of God and Spirit, self and eternity than the mass of men or even the cultured elite anywhere else. Where else could the lofty, austere and difficult teaching of a Buddha have seized so rapidly on the popular mind? Where else could the songs of a Tukaram, a Ramprasad, a Kabir, the Sikh Gurus and the chants of the Tamil saints with their fervid devotion but also their profound spiritual thinking have found so speedy an echo and formed a popular religious literature? This strong permeation or close nearness of the spiritual turn, this readiness of the mind of a whole nation to turn to the highest realities is the sign and fruit of an agelong, a real and a still living and supremely spiritual culture.[1]

*

There are many who, lamenting the by-gone glories of this great and ancient nation, speak as if the Rishis of old, the inspired creators of thought and civilisation, were a miracle of our heroic age, not to be repeated among degenerate men and in our distressful present. This is an error and thrice an error. Ours is the eternal land, the eternal people, the eternal religion, whose strength, greatness, holiness may be overclouded but never, even for a moment, utterly cease. The hero, the

Rishi, the saint, are the natural fruits of our Indian soil; and there has been no age in which they have not been born.[2]

*

India of the ages is not dead nor has she spoken her last creative word; she lives and has still something to do for herself and the human peoples. And that which must seek now to awake is not an anglicised oriental people, docile pupil of the West and doomed to repeat the cycle of the occident's success and failure, but still the ancient immemorable Shakti recovering her deepest self, lifting her head higher towards the supreme source of light and strength and turning to discover the complete meaning and a vaster form of her Dharma.[3]

*

...India must rise and be great and that everything that happened, every difficulty, every reverse must help and further their end. The trend was upward and the time of decline was over. The morning was at hand and once the light had shown itself, it could never be night again. The dawn would soon be complete and the sun rise over the horizon. The sun of India's destiny would rise and fill all India with its light and overflow India and overflow Asia and overflow the world. Every hour, every moment could only bring them nearer to the brightness of the day that God had decreed.[4]

SRI AUROBINDO

[1] *The Foundations of Indian Culture*, pp. 128-29. [2] *The Hour of God*, p. 344. [3] *The Foundations of Indian Culture*, pp. 380-81. [4] *Karmayogin*, p. 28.

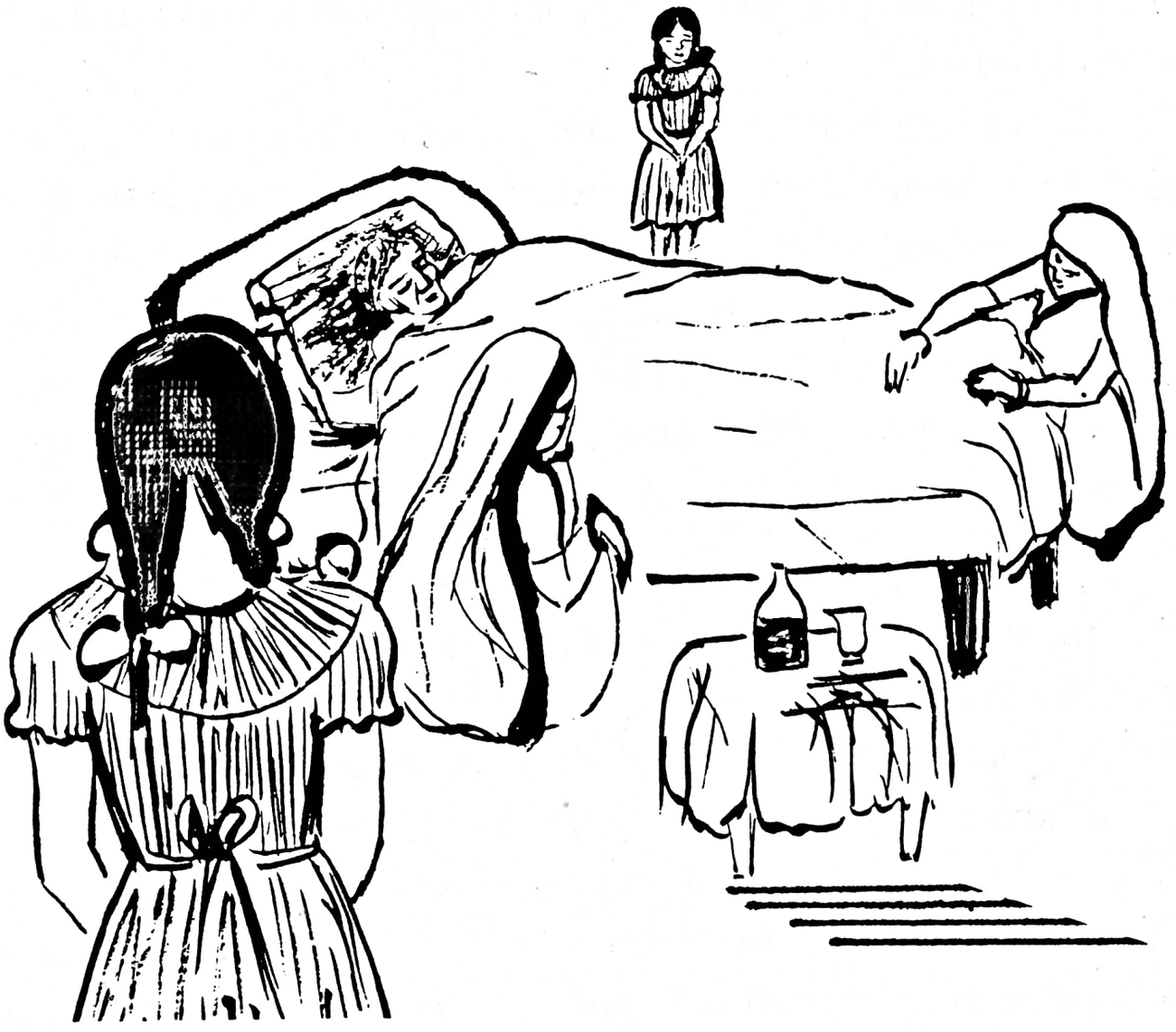
A Small Talk[1]

So I am going to tell you a story or perhaps stories. These stories, many of them, I have narrated on many occasions to your elders, that is to say, your predecessors who are now quite grown up and are at present among gentlemen. Here is the story:

Once upon a time there was a little girl, quite young, very nice, very pretty, living in her family with her parents, particularly in the company of her grandfather. This grandfather was rather old but extremely nice and kind and gentle like herself. He loved very much the child, indeed the grandfather adored his grand-daughter and the child reciprocated the feeling.

It happened however that the old man fell ill, very ill. It was quite natural, he was an old man. All people, friends and family members came to see him and gathered in the sick man's room. "How was he now?" The doctors were there. The little girl stood somewhat away from her grandfather's sick bed. She was sad, very sad indeed. All on a sudden she looked up towards her grandfather's bed and saw — strange, strange to say — quite near the bed another little girl standing — a little girl looking like herself in appearance and every way — her double as it were. She herself was standing on one side of her grandfather's bed, a little away. The other one was standing exactly like herself quite near the bed on the other side. She was amazed

[1] A talk given to the small children of the Ashram School on 13. 10. 1977.



and questioned herself: "What has happened? I am here, but my image, a reproduction of mine is over there." She approached her grandfather, the image also approached close to him. But nobody else noticed any thing; she only knew it and for others she was alone. She asked: "But who are you?" The other one answered: "I will tell you later on." And she disappeared. Subsequently the old man recovered, and the little girl also recovered her grandfather as before. But she continued wondering and questioning about her queer experience. There was no answer for sometime. But she was sure that it was due to her presence that she got back her grandfather. The fact could not be doubted.

The vision was absolutely real, there could be no question about it.

Later on and soon enough occasions came when she met again and again the same person, whenever there was any difficulty or danger ahead, to help her out of it. It was explained to her in course of time that this person who appeared to be the very image of herself was none else but herself, her real inner person.

*

In this connection some of you will surely remember the famous poem of the famous French poet Alfred de Musset where he speaks — "Nuit de Décembre" — of a strange companion who used to visit him from time to time, at critical moments of his life, come and sit by his side — some unknown person dressed in black who however resembled him as though his own twin brother:

Un pauvre enfant vêtu de noir
Qui me ressemblait comme un frère.

This story of a double person in oneself, one being the guide and mentor and friend and helper, is a phenomenon not very rare. Everybody, everyone of you have this companion, this friend who protects you, who loves you indeed. If you want you can see her, at least feel her, and this person is absolutely like you in appearance, your own self, the same face and figure as if reflected in a mirror when you stand before it; and then so real and living. He speaks to you, gives you good advice and so loving and adorable. One way of finding

her and coming in contact with her, seeing her and feeling her presence is to be always good, to be good and do good things, never to have bad thoughts, always to be clean in mind and decent in behaviour. This will draw your friend to you as if pulled by a magnet and you will feel her within you, near you, and the hidden comrade will reveal herself. This hidden friend is the Presence of the Mother, the Mother is always with you, with every one of you as I have been saying always.

I may say each one of you carries three persons in him, you are a triple personality: first of all your outside appearance, as you stand before the others groomed and dressed, hiding as it were within the trappings, your clothes, but behind that you are the bare and naked body, that is, your natural appearance. You have then quite another character than the former personality so clothed. But there is too something else, very different, behind that natural body. The body however includes or represents indeed the whole of your present nature: your body, your vital and your mind make one complex — the unit of your common normal personality. But these two are outer robes, hanging loose around another person, behind and within, hanging loose and standing aloof even like a clothing enveloping your body. It is that being which is your true being of whom I was telling you so long, the intimate brother and friend of yours, indeed your own true self, incarnating the Mother's presence and the Mother's love. It is only a matter of opening out your coat or coating!

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA